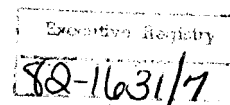


Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505



OEXA 82-1813/D

25 AUG 1982

Honorable Charles B. Rangel
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Rangel:

In Mr. Casey's absence I am taking the liberty of responding to your letter of 11 August 1982 concerning the four American churchwomen slain in El Salvador in December 1980. You ask that this Agency respond to the comments and requests stated in your letter, i.e., that the Central Intelligence Agency was not forthcoming in handling a request for information from Mr. William P. Ford, brother of one of the slain women.

At the outset, may I explain to you that this Agency at no time received any direct communication from Mr. Ford but did, in fact, receive a request under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) from Mr. Michael Posner, Executive Director, The Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights. Mr. Posner stated to us that he was acting on behalf of the families of the four women, hence, our correspondence was directed to him. In the Agency's final response to Mr. Posner, dated 15 July 1982, he was given all Agency-originated documents in sanitized form to protect sources and methods, plus all open-source material. In addition, Mr. Posner was advised that other documents located in our files that originated with other Government agencies were referred to those agencies for direct response to Mr. Posner.

I regret that you believe this Agency was remiss in its handling of the FOIA request by delaying and evading a response. The request was carefully reviewed by the General Counsel's office and a determination was made rather quickly to handle this request on a priority basis, in full consideration of the humanitarian aspects of this sad situation. Normally, FOIA requests are handled on a first-in-first-out principle; thus this request was given precedence over 2,800 other requests now being processed.

You comment also on "the blatant failure of the nation's intelligence agencies to arrive at sound and concurring investigative determinations...(and)...mars the credibility of our Federal intelligence agencies." The Central Intelligence Agency does not now have and has

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never had any investigative authority except as it relates to our own employees. We do not report on the activities of American citizens anywhere, except as authorized by Presidential Executive Order 12333 and related procedures.

That is not to say that we do not cooperate with other Federal agencies when and as requested. Our people would most certainly be alert to any information surfaced that related to a crime such as the murder of American citizens abroad and would pass that information to the agency having jurisdiction and responsibility. That was certainly the case in this particular situation.

I hope the above will help to explain this matter as it relates to this Agency, and that it will reassure you and the families of the deceased women that we are effectively carrying out our duties and responsibilities.

Sincerely,



John N. McMahon
Acting Director of Central Intelligence

cc: Honorable Edward P. Boland, Chairman
House Permanent Select Committee

on Intelligence *copy also made*

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Sincerely,

/S/ John N. McMahon

John N. McMahon
Acting Director of Central Intelligence

Distribution:

Original - Addressee

- 1 - DCI
- 1 - A/DCI
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- 1 - OGC [redacted]
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- 1 - DD/OEXA
- 1 - OEXA Record
- 1 - OEXA Chrono

LLD/ [redacted] (18 August 1982)

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25X1

MEMORANDUM FOR: D/OEXA

The ADI does not believe that
This proposed reply goes far enough:

- our initiation resulted in
correlation of ballistics evidence
(bullet + rifle), and the
accused are now in jail
waiting for trial

Indicate on reply to Rangel that
a "cc:" copy has gone to Chm/HPSCI
and send Bobel a copy.

Date

23 Aug 82

25X1

FORM 101 USE PREVIOUS
5-75 EDITIONS